

## What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is when someone forces you to work using fraud, deception, or threats.

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery affecting thousands of people both internationally and here in the United States. In October 2000, the U.S. government passed a law which makes trafficking offenses illegal. This law is called the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act.

## How VETA Started

In 2001, over 200 Vietnamese and Chinese workers were tricked into paying thousands of dollars each, in order to travel to work in a sewing factory on the island of American Samoa. Each worker was promised \$408 per month for wages, plus free food, and housing. However, once there, the workers were beaten, confined to the factory, barely fed, and forced to live in filthy conditions while the employer kept their travel documents.

After the U.S. government prosecuted the employer (Daewoosa), Boat People SOS along with other service providers came to the aid of the victims. Daewoosa survivors are now legally in the U.S. and receiving the benefits of immigration, health, education and employment assistance.

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## What if I (or Someone I Know) Need Help?

Contact local law enforcement  
(911 if you are in IMMEDIATE danger)

- \* Contact the Trafficking Information & Referral Hotline: 1.888.373.7888
- \* Contact the BPSOS branch office closest to you (listed below)  
We provide interpretation, counseling, legal and social services to help YOU.

### Virginia

6066 Leesburg Pike  
Suite 100  
Falls Church, VA 22041  
Tel: (703) 538-2190

### Pennsylvania

1029 South 3rd Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19147  
Tel: (215) 334-1500

### Texas

11205 Bellaire Blvd.  
Suite #B22  
Houston, TX 77072  
Tel: (281) 530-6888

### Georgia

3335 Chamblee-Dunwoody Road  
Chamblee, GA 30341  
Tel: (770) 458-6700

### Maryland

7411 Riggs Road  
Suite 328  
Adelphi, MD 20783  
Tel: (301) 439-0505

### California

9550 Bolsa Ave.  
Suite 201  
Westminster, CA 92683  
Tel: (714) 775-2214



## Who are the Victims of Trafficking?

### WHO

Men, women, and children can be trafficked across different countries or within their own countries. People who are most vulnerable to being trafficked include:

- \* People facing poverty, illiteracy, and economic crises
- \* People from areas of regional/civil conflicts
- \* Women and young children

### WHERE

Victims can be found in all types of employment. Some typical forms of forced labor occur in:

- \* Sweatshops (sewing or other types of labor)
- \* Restaurants
- \* Agricultural fields
- \* Domestic houses (as servants or nannies)
- \* Massage parlors/brothels
- \* Streets (as panhandlers)



### HOW

Victims are often placed in unsafe living or working conditions. Employers unlawfully restrict them to their jobs by:

- \* Withholding documents: passports, birth certificates, & identification cards
- \* Debt Bondage: withholding salary to pay for the costs of travel or passport fees
- \* Physical Abuse: choking, slapping, punching, kicking, rape, or using weapons
- \* Emotional/Psychological Abuse: threatening to harm victim or victims' family members, threats of arrest or deportation, destroying the victim's property, forcing the victim to commit illegal acts, keeping or victim in isolation

## Who are the Traffickers?

Anyone can be a trafficker--even husbands, family, friends, neighbors, or government officials. Traffickers can be individuals or members of organized crime syndicates. They may pose as job recruiters, matchmakers, or others who promise employment or marriage. These traffickers often offer to handle and pay for the costs of obtaining a passport, work permit, and other transportation fees for the victim.

## How Can You Protect Yourself?

You don't have to be a victim any longer! According to U.S. law, traffickers will be prosecuted and made to pay restitution to their victims. Additionally, trafficked persons have different immigration options and support services available to them, including healthcare, housing, transportation, education and legal services.

If an individual or company is making plans for you to work or travel away from home, make sure that you:

- \* CHECK with government or non-governmental legal & social services agencies on the legitimacy of your employer. Check both in your home and in your intended destination
- \* DO NOT give your passport to anyone to keep for you. Your employer has no right to withhold your passport.
- \* KEEP copies of your passport information and other forms of identification in a safe place where only you can find them.
- \* MAINTAIN CONTACT with a family member or friend at home once you have started your work.

If you think that you or someone you know is in this situation, do not hesitate to get help.

